

SAF/LLZ (Legislative Research Team)

TIERNEY, John F. (Democrat)
Representative, 6th District, Massachusetts
Elected 1996 to the 105th Congress
Reelected to succeeding Congress
BACKGROUND



Born: Salem, Massachusetts - 9 September 1951
Home: Salem Massachusetts
Marital Status: Single
Religion: Unspecified
Education: Salem State College, B.A., 1973; Suffolk University, J.D., 1976
Military: None specified
Profession: Lawyer

Political: No previous elected office. Ran unsuccessfully for the U.S. House in 1994 against Rep Torkildsen (R). In 1996 he defeated the incumbent with 48% of the vote (371 vote margin) Reelected in 1998 with 55% of the vote and in 2000 with 71% of the vote.

Rep Tierney, a liberal, was declared the winner after an official recount of the votes -- but by a slim margin. Received help from organized labor, including unions of the GE plant in Lynn, MA. Ran on traditional Democratic themes. Major focus was on education -- supports funds for Head Start, Safe and Drug Free Schools programs, and college loans -- and Medicare. Will fight any efforts to cut Social Security benefits. Supports efforts to create civilian jobs to address the decline in the state's defense industry. Opposes the GOP's 1994 Contract With America and supported what he termed the Contract With the Middle Class, Workers and Small Business People, which includes jobs, better schools, universal health care, environmental protection and programs for the young and elderly.

In the 106th Congress, during debate on H.R. 1569, war powers, said he believed the situation in Kosovo needed to be resolved through a diplomatic solution. Asked whether the bill's use of the word "elements" could be change to "troops." At a hearing, asked Mr. George Schneider, Dir, Strategic & Tactical Systems, OSD, what upgrades to the F-15 E could be reasonably expected. Also asked about the option of passing over the F-22 in favor of the JSF. Announced his intention to oppose deployment of any national missile defense system until it has been shown to be operationally effective against plausible missile threats to the US. Urged the administration to provide additional funds for the Office of Veterans Affairs. Stated that VA facilities in Massachusetts are increasingly hard-pressed to keep up with the higher cost of medical care. In a March 2, 1999, House Government Reform Subc on National Security hearing on Vulnerabilities to Waste, Fraud, and Abuse, questioned witnesses regarding the reduced cost of overtime in the F-22 program and the weapons acquisition process as it relates to national missile defense proposals.

Additional: President of the Chamber of Commerce. Is said to have worked his way through college and law school working as a janitor on the night shift.

AF Bases: Hanscom AFB (Also Reserve Forces); AF Plant 29 (GE)

COMMITTEES

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE

GOVERNMENT REFORM -- Subc on Energy Policy, Natural Resources and Regulatory Affairs;
National Security, Veterans Affairs and International Relations